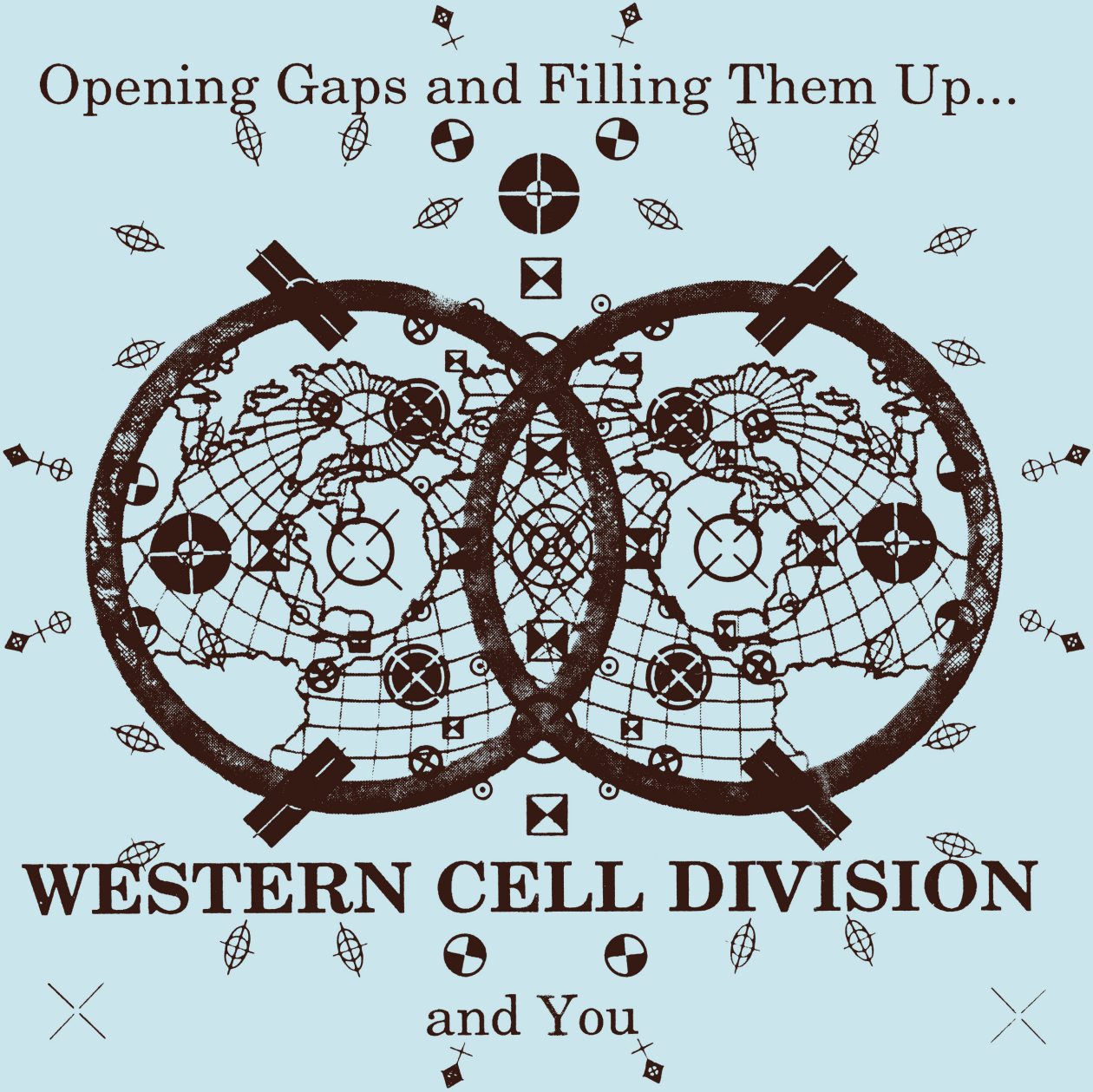
Opening Gaps and Filling Them Up...



WESTERN CELL DIVISION

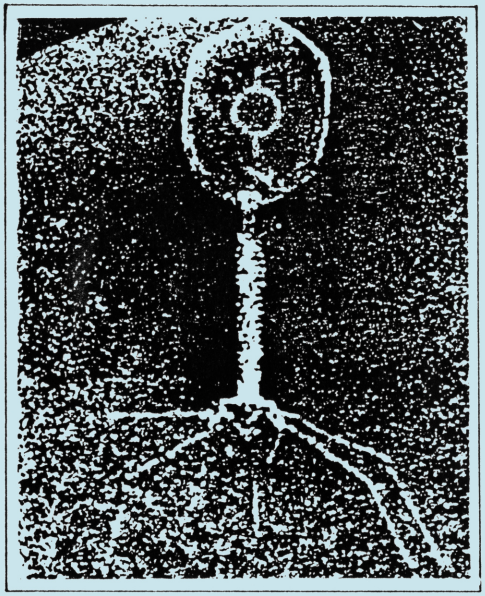
and You

INDUCTION

A homogenous 'Western Culture' seems to have proliferated to the point of consuming (producing) the globe. As the rate of its reproduction increases, so too does its appearance of imminent collapse - it watches itself desperately replicate with each death throe.

And yet one wonders if an interstice is momentarily created with each division of cells. If ancient, mutated and new "cultures" - deviant cultures - spring up in the gaps created (the fold of one reality overrunning another). Not some essential spirit stubbornly pushing through the concrete, but an altogether new culture, new perception, paradoxically made possible by the increasing folds in the reality fabric. Inspired by the richness of culture(s) in ruins, borrowing from the old no doubt, but subverting, perverting, detouring, mutating. Using it for convenience, but changing it when it becomes obvious that nothing remains pure.

At which point would such a Viral Culture preclude the Western Cell?
Could the former exist without the latter, a virus without a host?



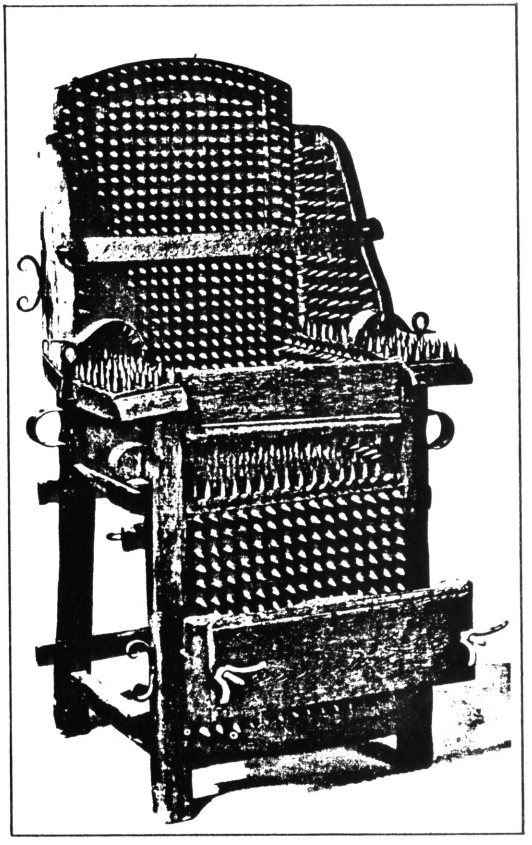
PLAGIARISM

"Plagiarism in late capitalist society articulates a semi-conscious cultural condition: namely, that there is 'nothing left to say', a feeling made more potent by the theoretical possibility of access to all knowledge brought about by new technologies. The practitioners of much of 'post-modern' theory have tended to proclaim this feeling rather smugly; but if there is nothing to say, they yet demonstrate that there will 'always' be something to sell. On the other hand, there are practitioners active in many disciplines who, recognizing the necessity for collective action demanded by the media such as film and electronic tape, engage in plagiarism in an attempt to expose and explode once and for all the individualistic attitudes which tend to make all human activity seem redundant and increasingly alienated. "

- Karen Eliot

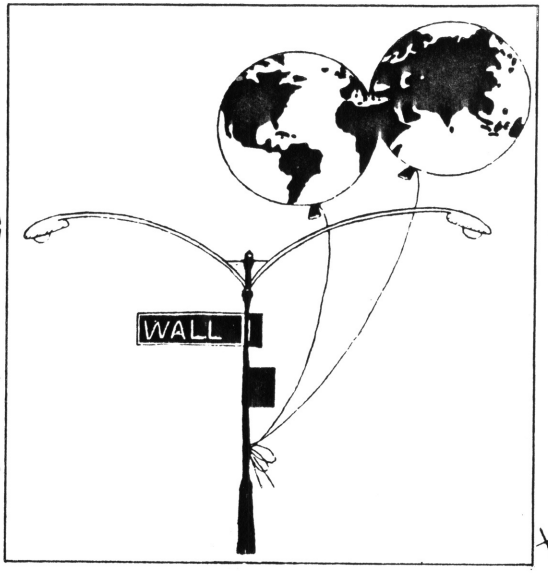
CENSORSHIP:
THE OLDEST OF SUPPRESSED TRADITIONS

It should come as no surprise that in a world dominated by apocalyptic illusions and the counter-real, that censorship should be popularly misperceived as a form of social repression. The contradictions which support such an inversion are manifest in every area of institutional life, they constitute the apparent "reality" of our "lives". Despite the fact that that consciousness has been demonstrated time and time again by logic, philosophy and science to be always the effect of a closed system of exclusive focus, of censorship, "literate" consensus maintains that censorship and silence are the negation of consciousness. It is clear that power has a vested interest in maintaining a monopoly on censorship so as to control the necessary flow of images and behaviors which constitute "social" reality. In the political presence of "free" press, "free" market and "democratic" systems which form late capitalism, the "concept of freedom" becomes an unreachable, collapsing absolute, coherent only in the regulation of its negation. Freedom means being unable to experience the world. In "capitalist" culture, power materializes within a fragmented surface-reality, a surface which conceals the abstractions of exchange-value which define its sophisticated totalitarianism. All experiences (nonmaterial commodities) are indistinct and equal when exchanged via capital, with class "privilege" determining how much of this worthless "equality" each person is entitled to. Over all visible things circulate the malign forms of work, communication, participation, and play. As we desire the negation of the imposed surface "reality", so too we make visible the horrifying mechanism exchange beneath the varnish of civilization. What is necessary is willingness on our part to give up the "identity" and "productivity" which capital has forced us to invest in it. We are addicted to production and to the consumption of identities to give our "lives" "value", since exchange has effectively suppressed the aspects of existing which would make it bearable. Nevertheless, in (fragmented) present time it would be useless to conjecture about the freedom of subjectivity projected for post-capitalist utopia, since such projections would only detract from the negative power of the present.

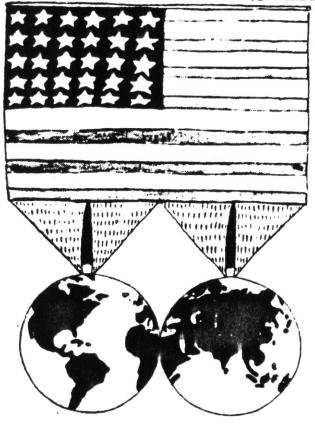


VARIETIES OF NEGATION

Anything is Anything. Anything can be censored for any reason, but the goal of revolutionary censorship is to censor everything for every reason. The censors of the "left", "right", "center", and all philosophies, theories, and religions all do their collective part, despite the fact that they imagine themselves to be motivated by the very "beliefs" important to negate. Do your part and start by censoring this text. There are of course such instances when questions arise relating to the censorship of censorship, so called "paradox", and in such cases it is up to the "individual" censor to determine the approach (s)he wishes to adopt. Some censorship requires the extremely temporary adoption of beliefs in order to formulate a convincing negation of another belief, but in many cases it is possible to transcend this compromise through apathy.



A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISERS



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FROM ORIGINALITY TO ONTOLOGY, THE PAIN OF THE IMAGE

Censorship is a more powerful, more revolutionary, and more populist form of subjectivity than "imagination" because it requires only familiarity with dominant "reality", rather than the "conscious" production of other ("imagined") realities. The possibilities for communal transformation of the world thus lie in the "negative" when one is capable of disconnecting from imposed notions of economy. Plagiarism is the "beginning", the negative point of culture which finds its justification in the "unique". Censorship supercedes plagiarism as an real negation of "originality" because it suppresses not only ("original") production, but also the reproduction (plagiarism, appropriation, etc...) which revalues the "original" and maintains its circulation in "reality". Censorship is to the present what plagiarism is to herstory. Both go instantly beyond the empty siren-song of academic "Gramatology" (a philosophy "against language" (sic)), that capitalist scam which pretends to talk about the negation of imposed "reality" without ever mentioning it. "Gramatology" and its "critical" contemporaries become raw vital material for plagiarism and censorship. As a revolutionary practice, both turn the tremendous waste of western "critical thought" into tools for the complete transformation of everything. Rewrite the situationist slogan thus: "Everyone, one step less if you want to be revolutionaries!"

THE HEALING POWER OF DOUBT

"Take things one step farther by not doing them."

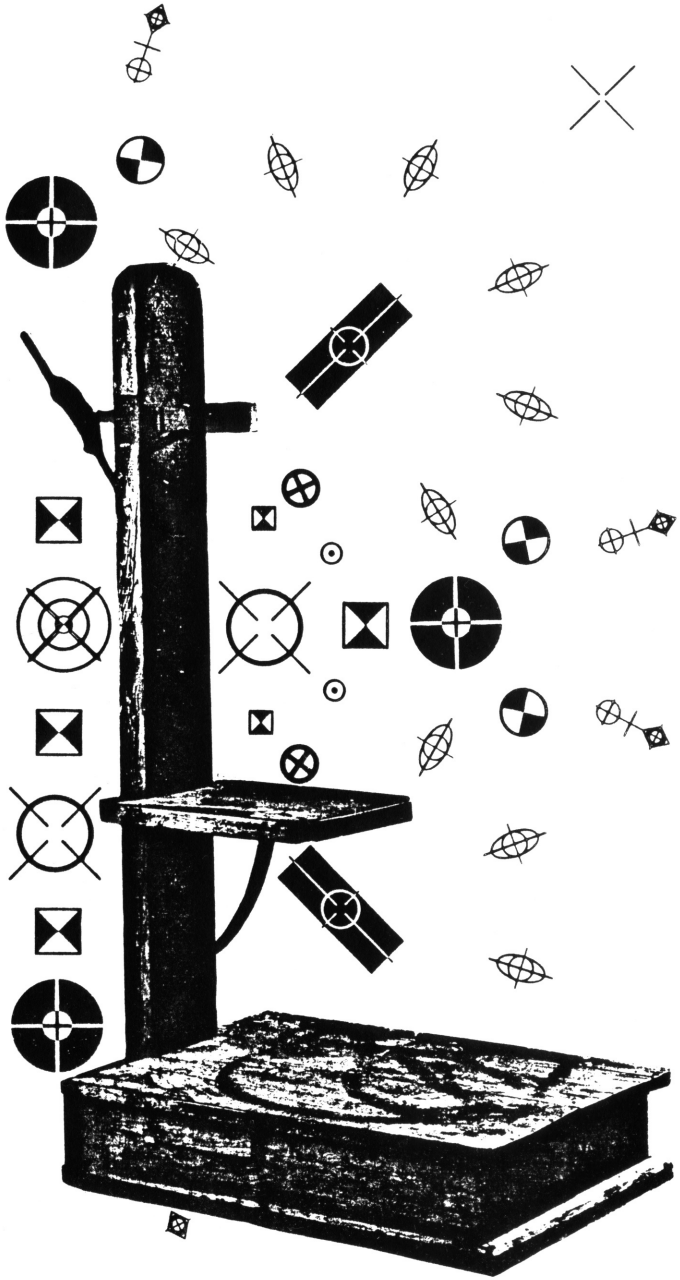
-Charles Boyd, 1984

Experimental philosophy finds its coherence in the creation of situations. In order to practically examine questions of truth it is necessary to suppress ideas which are initially believed, and then to observe popular reaction. Find reasons to stop yourself from thinking or saying things, and to stop other people from thinking or saying things. At least, try to get them to stop themselves from thinking or saying things by presenting them with ideas which make what they are thinking or saying seem obviously incorrect, but which do not offer alternatives. Perhaps begin by focusing on ideas, objects or actions which you are "against" and progress towards censoring things which you were previously "for". Kill your desires and live. Erase, destroy and make useless recorded information. Physically and otherwise attempt to suppress expression in art, politics and philosophy, and investigate the more technically difficult negations of science, math, history and so on. Resist culture and all other forms of institutional identity. Refuse to participate in and suppress interpersonal and mass social relationships. As you see fit, smash the "imagination", "schizophrenia", "death", "sexuality", "values", "time" and other forms of seduction, propaganda and abstraction which you are capable of perceiving. Experimentally break down the frames of reference by which you organize non-valued perceptions into entities: Eg. objects, ideas, means of self-perception, etc...

AN END TO SOCIAL RELATIONS

"THERE IS NO DEPROGRAMMING,
THE ONLY DEPROGRAMMING IS DEATH,
THERE IS NO DEATH"

"Self-destruction" is an impossibility, a semantic swindle. The "self", when reordered beyond dominant social reality will always seem "destroyed", but the "self", by definition always "is", and its alteration beyond recognition is nothing to worry about. Just as there is no opposite of "being" (what would it be?), the self-transformed simply cannot be perceived as what it was before. Thus the moralism against suicide is a reactionary resistance to change. Intrinsic "rationality" is an economy of language which reconstructs the physical reality of military capitalism on a mental plane. Given the total colonization of everyday life by capital, we are forced to speak the received languages of the media. It seems that only complete opposition to everything is not reversible. If this polemic then seems contradictory or absolutist, it is because it poses itself in opposition to a coherent totality, an absolute contradiction.



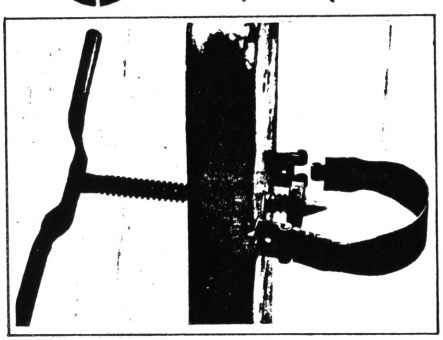
"Spinning by hand shows the direct relations of tempo and pitch in a copy. This is shown when a record is started at the wrong speed, but in scratching it is also shown that the standard speeds are arbitrary conventions and that, in fact, there is no real time contained on a record, or any real sounds. A record contains only symbols of sounds, and time symbolized by space. These relations change the audience's relation to music & copies of music. An underlying suggestion is that there is already enough materiality to be going on with , that a point of 'saturation' has now been reached - which in the 'West' is most surely the case."

- Karen Eliot

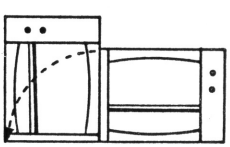
APPLICATION

(Television Deconstruction)

Information created from broadcast signals captured 'live' and improvisationally rearranged at the same moment; without the use of tape edits, visual or aural.



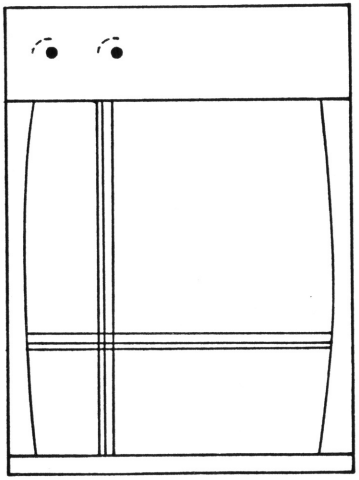
1. Television screen receving broadcast turned 90 degrees counter-clockwise.



2. Vertical hold adjusted to non-holding position , setting view frame in horizontal motion.

6. Audio signals looped, delayed, etc. through extraneous audio appliances.

3. Adjust color, contrast etc. to taste.



4. Image shot off screen, controlling focus, cropping, etc.

5. Second television monitoring camera turned 90 degrees counter-clockwise. Vertical hold adjusted to non-holding position. (Reconsituted signal now rolling vertically as well as horizontally).

IMPLICATION

(O.D.R. - The understated Ambiguity in the Retinal Image)

Three-dimensional space is produced primarily throughout the head and distributed in time like holograms through halls of memory. "Sensory" information bleeds into the visual cortex, reflexively indexed against memories and other references (eg. the vestibular system, partially "locating" the body) - the selective filters producing continuity. These 'mechanisms' are not "limited" in the minor sense, they are *material objects* which imply absolute qualities of orientation. While describing to the the elusive & insepafable viewer a 'physical' reality, the stable qualities of that reality are also embedded in the functioning of the viewer itself. A thin range of radiation is visible, within a parallax plane. The suppression of the neurotransmitter seritonin (an effect of sleep depravation, fasting & some "hallucinogenic" drugs) causes changes in alertness which are marked by an increase of visual details, as if the field of vision were focused beyond the sharpest possible image, and mounted in depth which swims with unfamiliar angles. This change in vision results not from "distortion", but from the availability of "real" information which the nervous system is usually suppressing. This "more accurate" view of space is sometimes confusing the the brain, as it does not conform to the biologically arbitrary formalizations which constitute its expectations. Other visual complications exist. Photography of infrared and ultraviolet light, visible recordings of sound-waves and other "transpositions" of energy all suggest space alive with intermingling fields (& objects) outside vision. Imagine watching a film and seeing each frame of a motion as a separate still image. The variability of perceptual sensations calls their "normative" condition into question, and as more variability is experienced, the normative condition is increasingly seen not as the "effect", but as the "cause" of usual "reality".

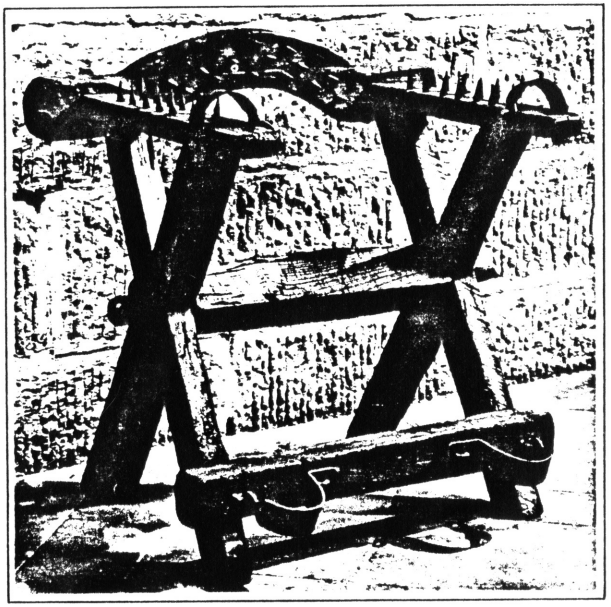
(broadcast from the head)

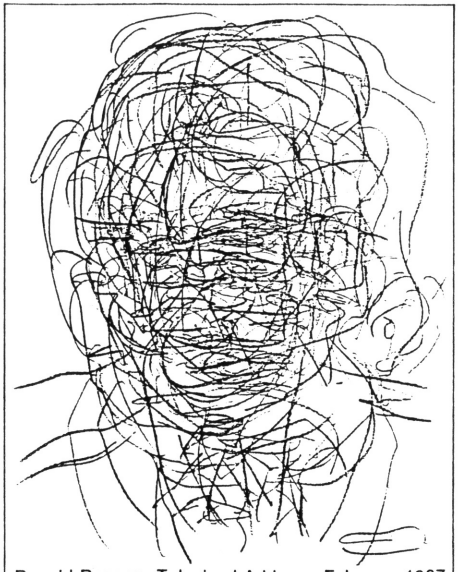
O.D. reality lacks "continuity". It is possible to see motion through depth without any visual reference points, the "characteristic" of depth separated from any other information. The visual field may extend completely around the head, and tends to continually expand. Edge-features twist around themselves, suggesting multiple points of perspective, along with a general sensation of supplementary spatial dimensions. Visual images, unfamiliar fragments of memories, are triggered and rise to the surface even as narrative sequences, dramatic images on an internal screen. The technology of the O.D. Device is greatly underdeveloped.

The device is part projector, emanating a beam of light through a retinal lens, illuminating an emulsion of brain-cells, frames of memory, onto (imagined) screens inside the back of the skull, a circular theater. The frequency of the alpha-waves is the **constant** for a kind of *persistence of vision.* O.D. is the articulation of a directorless cinema.

(APPLICATION)

"Reality" which lacks some of the assumed "fundamental" relationships between types of visual qualities can be called "Optically Disassociated reality", or "O.D.R.". It is possible to talk about O.D.R in the abstract, but difficult to clearly visualize its sensations by an act of will. This reality (O.D.R.) can be said to exist in a diffuse way throughout the totality of experience, wherever attention is not focused, or whenever the visual field becomes "confused". However, this kind of diffuse experience does not make a good example of an alternative "reality", as it is usually transient and rarely vivid. A more definitive access to O.D.R. is possible by stimulation of the visual cortex in the brain. This can be directly done with electrodes applied to the brain immediately after brain-surgery (as in some "scientific" research). A less complicated and dangerous way of perceiving O.D.R. is exposure to bright flashing lights which approximate the frequency of Alpha Waves (a generalization of electrical activity in the brain). This is easily accomplished by building a special apparatus. The viewer sits with eyes closed in front of a flickering light. The relationship of the brain-waves and received pulses from the optic nerve move in and out of phase and produce peaks of stimulation in the visual cortex, a kind of limited epilepsy discharging in the seat of visual continuity and visual memory. The experience seems not to contribute changes in emotion, but can induce seizures in epileptics. Everyone is encouraged to build "O.D.-devices" (also called: "Dream Machines" by some. Devices which grossly alter perceptual modes might be called "Hallucinomats"...).





Ronald Reagan, Televised Address, February 1987

TOWARDS THE NON-RECOGNITION OF VISUAL CONTINUITY CLUES

Currently, visual media rely upon the familiarity of the viewer-consumer with languages of continuity in order to transmit their multi-leveled messages. The highly refined editing techniques used on television are in a sense the content of the programming as they invest each image with its 'meaning', generating a narrative from infinitely malleable materials. Until visual media transmissions are technically inseparable from 'reality', they will rely upon the perceiver's reflexive acceptance of compositional semantics in order to be comprehensible. Zooms, pans, cross-cuts and so forth all act as culturally learned cues to identify the viewer in a particular way with a corporate invented space.

In the West production and consumption have traditionally been mispresented as being 'different' activities. Consumption is supposedly 'passive' while production 'creates' the world in which consumption takes place. A major goal of capitalism has been to reduce the majority of the population to the role of uncritical (& thus 'passive') consumers of a produced 'reality' critically controlled by a ruling class. Consumption can in fact be 'active' and thus represent the undetermined intentions of the consumer as critically autonomous from the intentions of production. This process does not necessarily require the creation of 'new' languages, but does imply an increased control of participation by consumers in the old, as a revolution.

If it is possible to 'learn' the reflexive language of the media then it is possible to alter and suppress that reflex. The 'individual' can alter her perceptions so that television does not produce the content of the reality it wants to present; but instead produces a 'randomized' reality, rich with alternative logics and experiences to those of the commodity. Actors disappear, time-travel and talk directly to you if you take the image on the screen 'literally' - effectively suppressing its ideological content with its own superabundance.

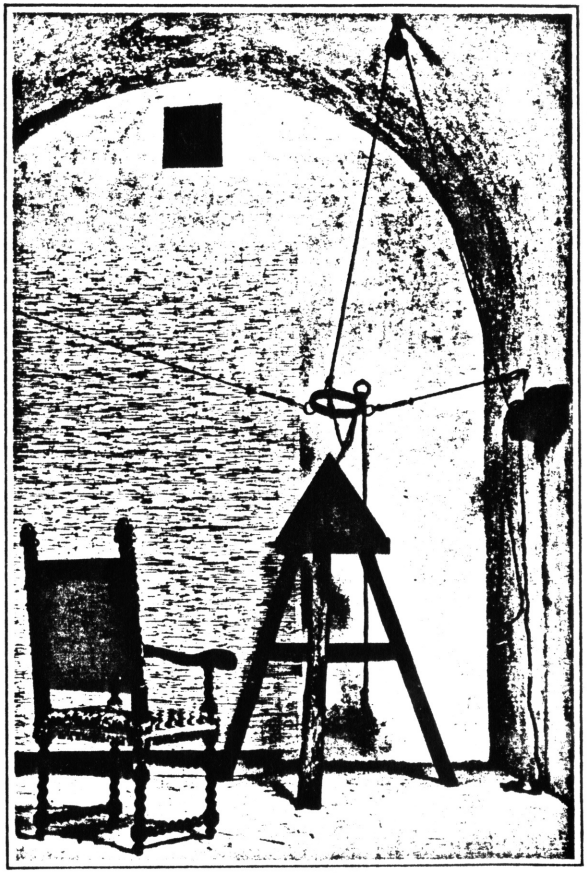
Through the rejection of its own language, television potentially becomes an activity which generates new applications and levels of entertainment. Though the frequency of appearance of certain images may still carry a certain influence over attitudes, the possibility of their automatic negation through juxtaposition is significant. The active development of perceptual anti-skills in individuals is a step away from the domination of 'the world' by images.

POPULAR MECHANICS

The 'hard' technological shell which mediates most activites relies upon the unfamiliarity of the vast majority of people with its technical workings. The industry & 'science' of 'specialists' create and implement technical power behind the scenes. To the extent that 'nonspecialists' can sabatoge, manipulate & teach technologies, they can be revealed as impermanent and perhaps useful fixtures. Behind every wall are conduits for the transmission of electricity, water and information which could be diverted ...

"By reconstituting dominant images, by subjectivising them, we aim to create a 'normality' better suited to our requirements than the media nightmare dictated by power. However, we have never imagined that this can be achieved through art exposure. The attitudes used to sell washing powder have a powerful hold over our consciousness precisely because the images associated with them are those most often reproduced in the media. For an image to be effective it needs continuous reproduction in the press and on tv. The only viable alternative to our strategy of exposure to images reconstituted through plagiarism is the physical destruction of transmission and print technology."

- Karen Eliot



and now a word from our sponsor

ART STRIKE

WE CALL ON ALL CULTURAL WORKERS TO PUT DOWN THEIR TOOLS and cease to make, distribute, sell, exhibit or discuss their work from 1 January 1990 to 1 January 1993. We call on all galleries, museums, agencies, 'alternative' spaces, periodicals, critics, theaters, art schools etc.., to cease all operations for the same period.

Art is conceptually defined by a self-perpetuating elite and marketed as an international commodity. Those cultural workers who struggle against the reigning society find their work either marginalized or else co-opted by the bourgeois art establishment.

The ruling class uses art as a 'transcendental' activity in the same way it once used religion to justify the arbitrariness of its enormous privelege. Art creates the illusion that, through activities which are actually waste,this cilivilization is in touch with 'higher sensibilities' which redeem its other activites. Those who accept this logic support the bourgeois even if they are economically excluded from the class. The concept that "everything is art" is the height of this smokescreeen, meaning only that certain members of the ruling class feel particularly free in expressing their domination of the proletariat to one another.

To call one person an 'artist' is to deny another the equal gift of vision; thus the myth of 'genius' becomes an ideological justification for inequality, repression and famine. What an artist considers to be her or his identity is a schooled set of attitudes; preconceptions which imprison humanity in history. A society in which'separate' roles are fixed and inflexible implies political hierarchy. It is the roles derived from these identities, as much as the art products justified through reification, which we must reject.

Unlike Gustav Metzger's Art Strike of 1977-1980, our intention is not to destroy those institutions which might be perceived as having a negative effect on artistic production. Instead, we intend to question the role of the artist and its relation to the dynamics of power in capitalist society

1990 - 1993 THE YEARS WITHOUT ART

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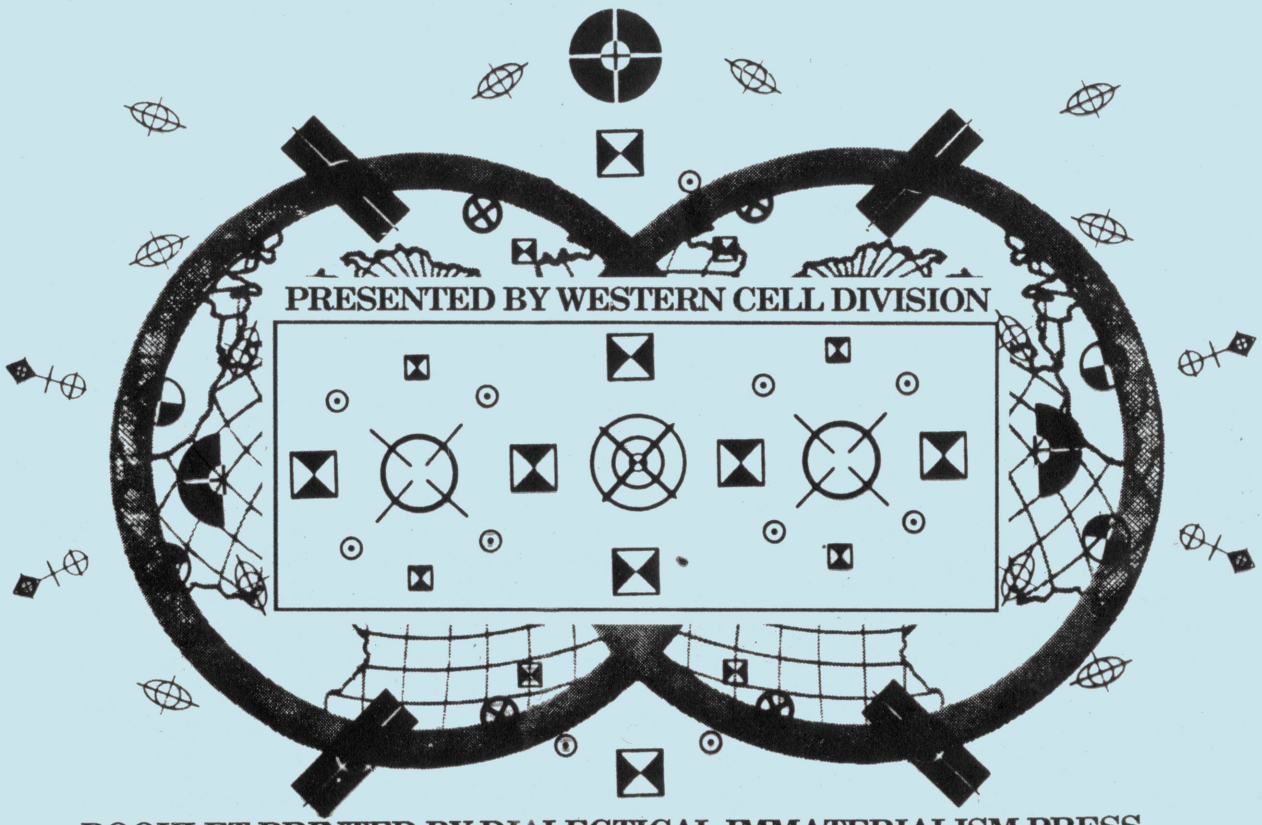
(WESTERN CELL DIVISION/ TELEVISION DECONSTRUCTION/ OPTICALLY DISASSOCIATED REALITY)



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